

Dear Chairman Powell and Commissioners,
As a citizen who wants to be informed about the political and electoral issues that affect my life, I am very disappointed by the dearth of informative television programming featuring such coverage.

Local public affairs programming is nigh non-existent--constituting less than one half of one percent of all local programming. More than fifty percent of news broadcasts prior to the 2002 elections did not include any campaign stories whatsoever. Our republic is in danger of foundering when many Americans don't know basic facts about the candidates or the issues that affect them , as was the case in the 2000 elections.

Since broadcasters have most certainly failed in this obligation to serve public interests, the FCC should delineate meaningful public interest requirements that include local civic and electoral affairs programming. Minimally, broadcasters should air three hours per week of local civic and electoral affairs programming, with at least two hours devoted to substantive election coverage in the six weeks prior to Election Day.

As the elections approach, a healthy democratic republic demands that citizens have access to a diversity of opinions and voices on the choices confronting us.

Sincerely,

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